

Honorable Senate Judiciary Committee: Greetings

Thank you for taking consideration of my comments on SB220 in opposition of this Bill. Hopefully, I am able to be here in person, as you will see that I have a very personal stake in this legislation. Both my husband and I are 65 plus years old. "Compassion and Choices" sounds like a very CARING concept. I saw an ad in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle asking for support of SB220 which would codify a Montana supreme Court decision that says your end of life choices are between you and your doctor. When I looked into this group and their researchers I found that their organization is from Colorado and their research is done by a group from California. Even so... Man alive that sounds Caring and even protective of "YOUR RIGHTS". But is it??? Rhetoric is often very deceptive!! What would the end result of this SB220 entail. The opportunity for MISUSE of the legal protection for those who would actively seek the death of a person is immense. The language does not address the person who may no longer be in control of His/Her Healthcare. Decisions could be made due to funding availability or even convenience by a person who has HEALTHCARE POWER OF ATTORNEY for another. This is the ultimate of ELDER or DISABLED PERSON ABUSE that can be imagined. I can testify to that from a personal side as my father (a WWII Omaha Beach Vet, born in Ekalaka, Mt) became terminal with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease in the state of Oregon. A sister-in-law attained control of his decisions and before the family knew it, Dad had the "prescription". When I found out, I asked him and he told me, "I just do not want you kids to suffer." I was able from my experience as a Nurse to answer his questions regarding "What will happen to me next" and he NEVER had the "prescription" filled. I was able to be at his bedside, care for him, and keep him comfortable until he naturally ceased to breathe and have a heartbeat. I am still amazed at the anger that was unleashed at me by that sister-in-law...until I found that there was only enough money left from my father's coffers to bury him and pay his final expenses. This legislation does not use the word SUICIDE. WHY??? I ask each of you Committee Members to read the explanation of the word SUICIDE. Check it out on Wikipedia. "SUICIDE" "to kill oneself- act of intentionally causing one's own death. Suicide is often committed out of despair, the cause of which can be contributed to a mental disorder such as depression(which can be treated)bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, alcoholism

or drug abuse. Stress factors such as financial difficulties or troubles with interpersonal relationships often play a role." Already Montana Has the distinction of being a state with HIGH SUICIDE Rates. Please look up the Billings Gazette article of November 25 ,2012. It reveals that Veterans , American Indians, Seniors and Teenagers are very high in those statistics. I respectfully request that each of you Committee Members look beyond the Rhetoric and Party Lines and Vote NAY on SB 220. Already Montana has the Reputation of being a High Suicide Rate State DO NOT MAKE MONTANA THE 3'rd Suicide State in the Union. Choices are already being offered our Montana People by the POLST Form That is MONTANA PROVIDER ORDERS FOR LIFE-SUSTAINING TREATMENT. This is a written form indicating a Patient/Clients wishes/CHOICES that is between HIM/HER and the provider. Montana has already provided CHOICES!

Thank You for your consideration of my testimony

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I have been a Nurse since 1983  
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